

INTERACTIVE METHODS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR YOUNG AGED LEARNERS

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Abstract:

Teaching children foreign languages is always a challenge, as it requires special knowledge and different approaches in terms of developing their communicative skills. This article devotes to analyze the methods to improve young learner's communication in classroom and encourage them to speak fluently in foreign language. An interactive game, organized by teachers during the foreign language lessons, also improves children's interest towards the language and encourages them to be active rather than being just listeners.

Keywords: Foreign languages, communicative skills, teachers, interactive game, classroom.

Introduction

Nowadays, learning English is becoming common among children that they are taught the language at the first grades of school. In that case, teachers should use different methods to take the children's attention to the learning process. As teachers are the only one to be responsible to lead the classroom, they should be aware of different activities and techniques related to student's interests and learning strategies.

Teachers and educators widely discuss the necessity of reviewing and updating the pedagogies used all over the globe. Though the increasing number of schools is reported to be innovating, "schools remain largely seen as very resistant places for innovation" (Peterson, Dumont, Lafuente, & Law, 2018, p. 4).

It should be noted that a teacher working with children deal with so-called mixedability groups. That is why a teacher has to take into consideration multiple intelligences of students: different types of personality, thinking, scope of attention, the ability to perceive and process information (Korovina, Pushkina, & Krivoshlykova, 2017, p.10). In education system, interactive activities are too important, especially in foreign language lessons, since they drive the learners to



think and communicate in addition to give enthusiasm for young learners. Teachers should plan the lessons with the true way, since learning is invariably changing, teachers don't have any other choices but to keep modifying their teaching methods and approaches [2, c. 51]. Developing young learners' speaking skills is connected to improve their verbal and thinking capacity and interest to language. The effectiveness of teaching young learners correlates with a teacher's ability to resort to various strategies which interactive cognitive strategies prevail since they provide appropriate acquisition of speaking skills. Apparently, teaching young learners requires special approaches to planning and organizing the educational process. Experts highlight "meaningful practice" which suggests "an activity where controlling of language is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice" (Richards, 2006,p.16). Buhrow and Garcia (2006) recognize, that meaningful practice results in meaningful communication, for kids, "learning is all about exploring their passions and interests"(p. VIII).

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Teachers have to spend time to question themselves which skills or sub-skills are to be improved in the learner's status by games in the particular topic. But it doesn't mean they change the topic or only organize activities. If the teachers are flexible the lesson will be more interesting for students. Games can be used as a warm-up at the beginning of class, as an introduction to new vocabulary or grammar, as a review activity at the end of a lesson, chapter or before an exam.

Interactive activities:

10 questions

Ten questions is one of the best interactive activities for young learners to revise the vocabulary, they have learnt. In this game, students should be divided into 2 groups. One group will think one of the words from their vocabulary list. Then the other group should find it by asking ten questions. They should be set that every group



member will ask only one question. And their answers will be “yes” or “no”. The group cannot ask explanation or additional details.

This activity helps them to memorize new words and communicate with each other to discuss the question.

Pictionary is a really fun game for children. The game involves drawing a picture on the board. One student come to the board and is given a word in flashcard, and he or she should draw the image of the word given without speaking. The whole class will try to find the word. This game also helps children to use their creativity.

Story creating

In this activity all of the students participate with their own ideas and imagination. One learner start a simple story with one sentence. For example “Once upon a time there was a child in one village”. Then every child adds one sentence with their depending on their imagination without any limitations. This story can be funny, dramatic or detective according to students. This activity provides them to use their creativity and knowledge about grammar.

Role-play

In this game teacher gives roles for children like shop assistant, customer, doctor and patient. The children can memorize the little texts that they make related to their role. Then they play the roles at the board. The key point for the teacher should not interrupt the role-play since the children are excited about the play, overcome psychological barrier and are not afraid to make mistakes. Because by memorizing mini-dialogs and speech patterns, the chances of making mistakes are minimized (Richards, 2006, p.4). At the same time, the teacher writes down their mistakes to discuss after the play.

Taking time bomb

This activity is turned to be favorite among both teachers and students as it practically needs no time to prepare. Children make a circle and the teacher says one topic such as fruits or wild animals, then he or she switches on music and gives the students a ball. They turn the ball over until the music is paused. The child, handling the ball, say one word related to the topic, if they do not say the appropriate word, they will lose the game. Then the process continues until one student wins.

Dream room

This is a very enjoyable activity for children as it demands to draw and describe a room based on their interests and dreams, especially when they are learning “There is/There are”.



Back word

For this activity, the teacher should write words, which were taught to children, on a piece of paper and stick them to the back of children's shoulders. The other students should tell the child some adjectives, details about his or her word. Then the learner should find it. Benefits of interactive games: Kutbiddinova claims that the teacher's activity gives a way to the activity of students, and the task of teacher is to create conditions for students' initiative.

Since children are naturally active and enthusiastic, they easily lose their interest and attention if the lesson only consists of explanation and theoretical information. There are some benefits of interactive games for young learners:

Interactive games for children often challenge their memories and make them actively think. This helps them mentally develop and also prove handy for children who have attention problems. Some young learners find memorizing vocabulary very difficult, and they easily forget the words within a week. In that case, playing interactive games in classroom drive them to learn the words quickly and for a long time. Another outstanding benefit of interactive games is helping children to develop their social skills. Games are held in team, in that case they learn how to work together, cooperate and trust one another. Doing teamwork is very beneficial for children to find their private role in life and improve self-esteem. Interactive games teach children to accept both losing and winning, and to follow discipline. Playing interactive games in teamwork make them close to their friends and improve their communication

Conclusion

It must be concluded that the interactive activities are important for every foreign language lessons since they are a unconventional way of teaching. The interactive method-based teaching, suggested in the article, boosts young learners' motivation, broadened their horizon, helps to create effective educational environment. Active training method is a form of organization of interaction between students and teachers, in which the teacher and students interact with each other during class, the students being not passive listeners, but active participants in the training session (Karayani, 2003). The interactive games play a great role to make children happy and interested and teach them different skills that will be needed in the future.



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